WASHINGTON MONTHLY
February 1986

The real story
Soviet combat brig

The STUPIDITY of 'Intelligence'

by Stansfield Turner

"The most profound disappointment of my presidency," Jimmy Carter said of the failure to secure Senate ratification of the SALT II agreement. He had staked his presidential prestige and, to a significant extent, his political future on the signing and ratification of the treaty. While many factors combined to put Senate ratification in doubt, the White House thought the prospects hopeful even in an election year; hopeful that is, until an intelligence failure concerning the report of a brigade of Soviet troops in Cuba caused a political uproar that seriously damaged the chances for passage of SALT II. Here, Stansfield Turner, director of the CIA at the time, gives his account of the mishandling of the report and the unnecessary damage it caused.

Technology has so increased the amount of information we can acquire that a whole new set of problems has resulted. On the one hand, analysts are inundated with data and must find ways to filter, store, and retrieve what is significant. On the other hand, analysts must be concerned with whether they are receiving everything that is collected in their area of interest; with whether the members of the intelligence community—the CIA's espionage branch, the NSA [National Security Agency], the Defense organizations responsible for overhead reconnaissance, the CIA's electronic surveillance component, the State Department's diplomatic reporting system, the FBI's foreign intelligence branch, the Defense Intelligence Agency's [DIA] attaches, the intelligence organizations of the military services, and the intelligence offices of the departments of Treasury, Energy, and the Drug Enforcement Agency—all share what they collect. An unfortunate example of information not being shared adequately came in the summer of 1979. It led to the most serious intelligence failure of my tenure. The failure to forecast the fall of the Shah earlier that year was of far less significance than our mishandling of the report that a "combat brigade" of Soviet troops was in Cuba. Had we predicted the Shah's fall from power even six or seven months ahead of time, there was little the United States could have done to prevent it. The reporting on the combat brigade, however, did play a direct part in scuttling the SALT II arms control treaty with the Soviet Union.

In June 1979 President Carter had met with President Brezhnev and signed the SALT II treaty. The Senate was preparing to hold its initial hearings on ratification when, on July 18, the *Washington Star* reported, "Sen. Richard Stone,

Continued

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D-Fla., yesterday said Soviet combat troops may be in Cuba in violation of the agreement that ended the Cuban missile crisis in 1962." The obvious implication was that if the Soviets could not be trusted to abide by an old agreement, the Senate should not ratify a new one with them. While SALT II was stalled over this issue, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, in December 1979, and the treaty was scuttled. If the leak had been the truth, its effect on the treaty might have been justifiable. But it was not. The chain of events it triggered was unfortunate.

That chain actually began in the spring of 1979, when National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski directed a review of all intelligence on Soviet military activities in Cuba. He was concerned about increasing Soviet and Cuban activities in Central America. In response, I told the intelligence community to review files for information that may have been overlooked. In early July the NSA came up with something old but new. What was old was a conclusion buried in its files that the Soviets in Cuba had a unit designated a "brigade." What was new was that this conclusion had never been shared with the rest of the intelligence community. Some of the clues the NSA used to reach this conclusion came from its own signals intelligence, some from photo and espionage information given it by other agencies.

The United States was well aware that the Soviets had a sizable training mission assisting the Cuban military. What the new White House-directed search did was remind the NSA that one unit in that training mission was referred to by the Soviets as a brigade. On the grounds that the term "brigade" is normally associated with combat units, rather than with training, the NSA jumped to the conclusion that the unit had a combat function. That was the inference from a sparse fact or two. To emphasize its conclusion, it coined the term "combat brigade" to identify the unit as what it thought it was.

Next, the NSA published the conclusion as part of its daily distribution of new, raw intelligence data. When readers saw the designation "combat," they imagined a unit preparing to move out of Cuba and go to war in Central America. We were already worried about Nicaragua, whose government was on the verge of collapse. Because intelligence had never reported a Soviet combat unit in Cuba, people assumed that the brigade had just arrived. It looked like a threatening move made by the Soviets just after they had signed a treaty with us.

The NSA report was hardly out before it found its way to Senator Stone. This was a deliberate leak by someone in the Executive Branch; the report had not been distributed to the Congress. Stone, with a large constituency of anti-Castro Cuban refugees, had reason to stay alert to developments in Cuba. He also had a constituency of conservative Floridians who disliked his having voted for the Panama Canal Treaty in 1978. To placate both constituencies as he faced an uphill battle for reelection in 1980 (a battle that he lost), he needed an opportunity to demonstrate that he could be tough on the Soviets and the Cubans.

On the morning of July 17, at a public hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Stone alluded to the fact that he had intelligence on a previously undisclosed Soviet military presence in Cuba. Later that day in a secret hearing he pressed Defense Secretary Harold Brown, myself, and several others for more details. Brown stated that "there is no evidence of any increase in the size of the Soviet military presence in Cuba over the past several years." I agreed with that. Brown went on, though, to assert that "intelligence does not warrant the conclusion that there are any other significant Soviet military forces in Cuba" besides a training group. This went a good bit further than I thought warranted, in view of the NSA's categoric assertion that there were Soviet combat forces in Cuba. The rest of the intelligence community, though, had just begun to check on the NSA's opinion.

In the meantime, the quotation appeared in the *Washington Star*, clearly leaked from the secret hearing. ABC's Ted Koppel covered the story a day later; John Scali on the same network discussed it a few days after that. Fortunately, it was not picked up anywhere else and faded from public attention. That gave us in the intelligence community some breathing space. We were glad to have that, because we not only were reviewing files but had new intelligence that the brigade was going to participate in a special field exercise in early August, just a few weeks away. If we could watch that exercise, we might learn something new and more conclusive. We, of course, did just that. What we learned was that this unit was doing field training on its own, not simply training Cubans. That was a possible indication that it was preparing for combat. If this kind of training had taken place before, we had not detected it. A few days after the exercise, the CIA published an independent evaluation saying that the unit was indeed a combat brigade.

The CIA's confirmation threw the administration into as much panic as can be generated in Washington in mid-August, when most officials are away on vacation. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, still on holiday, immediately recognized that when the word got out, the SALT treaty would be in trouble. He was right. The CIA's report was published in the widely distributed *National Intelligence Daily* (NID). Because the subject was sensitive, the CIA took the unusual step of checking with the staff of the National Security Council before publishing. Approval was given. On August 29, less than a week after the item appeared in the NID, Clarence Robinson, a writer for *Aviation Week* magazine, phoned Richard Baker, on the staff of David D. Newsom, the under secretary of state, for confirmation of a story he had heard about a new Soviet military unit in Cuba. It was clear that he had a copy of the item from the NID. Baker told Robinson that the State Department had no comment.

Newsom immediately contacted Vance for permission to notify key members of Congress that the story was bound to come out soon. Congress was in recess, and the lawmakers, some of them overseas, had to be reached by phone. Newsom urged each one not to let the story get blown out of proportion. All of them took the news as a matter of course except Senator Frank Church of Idaho (who had been chairman of the Senate committee that had investigated allegations of intelligence abuses). Church was rather more liberal than his Idaho constituents. Like Stone, he was facing a tough battle for reelection in 1980 (which he also lost). He too was looking for ways to show that he could be more firm with the Soviets than most of the people of Idaho thought he was. He immediately saw that going public with the information Newsom had given him was a good means for doing that. He asked Newsom if he could. Vance, who was resigned to the item's imminent release and knew he needed the support of Church, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, to get the SALT II treaty approved, acquiesced. Church called a press conference. *Aviation Week* had gone to press before

Keeping Secrets

The NSA [National Security Agency], with its military orientation, also collaborates with the military services to keep the CIA out of the analysis of major military issues. For instance, on joining the CIA I quickly recognized that our agency was not up-to-date on the latest developments about some very secret aspects of the Soviet Navy. I went to the secretary of the Navy, Graham Claytor, and explained the benefit to the Navy of having a second opinion on what was happening with the Soviet Navy. Graham immediately agreed to try to get the Navy to release more data to the CIA. Over a period of years, the two of us were able to open the door only a small crack. Many of the needed data were collected by Navy ships and aircraft, not by intelligence elements under the control of the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI). The material collected was therefore technically outside the DCI's jurisdiction. Some of it, though, was electronic intercept material processed by the NSA for the Navy. I directed Vice Admiral Bobby Inman, director of the NSA to share that information with the CIA. He said he could not, because the Navy contended that it was tactical, not national, intelligence. The Navy had placed it in a special code word compartment to which the CIA did not have access. This, of course, was a bureaucratic ruse, and the loser was the United States.

S. T.

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Church's press release but, ironically, did not run the story. The editors apparently did not feel they had sufficient confirmation to print it. Thus, the administration had more time to deal with the problem than it realized. Vance could have restrained Church for a little while anyway.

Instead, Church at once took the position that the Senate should postpone debate on SALT II until the Soviets withdrew the brigade. More than a month was consumed in the attempt to work out some arrangement with the Soviets that would satisfy the Senate. The Soviets were not flexible. On October 2, unmoved by a major presidential speech on the subject the night before, the Senate voted to postpone consideration of ratifying SALT II until the president assured them that Soviet troops in Cuba were not engaged in a combat role. On December 25 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, and all consideration of ratifying SALT II ceased. Whether the Senate would have ratified it if there had not been the delay over the combat brigade, we can only speculate.

The unnecessary panic in the White House and State Department about notifying Congress and mollifying Senator Church was harmful. The issue became hot before they were ready to handle it. It turned out that in 1963 the Kennedy administration had agreed to a Soviet brigade's remaining in the location where we identified the combat brigade in 1979. The White House and State Department had lost track of that. With some research into this history, State should have been able to present the intelligence to the Congress and the public in a less alarming light. The CIA and the NSA had in their files reports going back to the late 1960s that used the term "brigade" in connection with Soviet activities in Cuba. These too had been forgotten. As a piece or two of this information emerged at the NSA, it was not illogical to conclude that the brigade had a combat function, especially after it was seen doing independent, combat-type training. That, however, was not the only possible conclusion that could have been drawn. It could have been a unit that provided an opportunity for the several thousand Soviet soldiers in Cuba to get occasional refresher courses in basic soldiering skills, such as driving tanks or firing artillery. Or the brigade could have been preparing to put on a demonstration for the Cubans. Our playing up this combat training exercise as something new was misleading. It was new to us, but such exercises might have been going on unnoticed. After all, we detected the one in August only because we had begun paying special attention to the brigade and because the intelligence community's collection effort had been particularly well coordinated in predicting and tracking the exercise.

The NSA bears most of the blame in the case of the Soviet brigade, but the rest of the intelligence community did not respond well once the NSA's report was out. Professional jealousy was at work. The NSA had got a scoop. The CIA and the others feigned a lack of interest in the report until it became obvious that it was too significant to ignore. That, I believe, is the only explanation for the CIA's dragging its feet in searching its files and discovering that it knew there had been a brigade in Cuba for a long time. Most of all, though, everyone became defensive.

In part this was because analysts dug in their heels at what they perceived as pressure from policy-makers to play down the significance of the brigade. In part it was reluctance to admit error and weaken the community's credibility in outsiders' eyes.

Why did the intelligence community present an incomplete picture of the brigade? The fundamental mistake was in NSA's doing its own analysis. The next was in publishing it. The NSA is mandated to collect intelligence, not to analyze it. It must do enough analysis about what it has

collected to decide what it should collect next. In intelligence jargon this level of analysis is termed "processing." Processing is regularly stretched by the NSA into full-scale analysis. In this instance, the abuse of processing was flagrant. The NSA's first report on the brigade was based on old information that had previously been processed. Having rediscovered it, the NSA had the responsibility to turn it over to the analysts at the CIA, the DIA, and State for evaluation. This is not purely a matter of bureaucratic turf. Although the NSA has excellent analysts to do its processing, it does not have the range of analytic talent needed for responsible analysis, nor all of the relevant data from the other collecting agencies needed for a comprehensive job. The NSA's analysis is bound to be biased in the direction of what signals intercepts tell and is less likely to take account of photographic or human intelligence. The NSA and other collecting agencies also do not have the consistent contact with policy-makers that the analytic agencies do. In this case, it meant that the NSA was not sensitive to how the policy-makers would interpret the term "combat."

A dangerous side effect of the NSA's regular transgression from processing into analysis is that it leads to deliberate withholding of raw information from the true analytic agencies. The NSA wants to get credit for the scoop. Even when the NSA does release information promptly, it is frequently so digested that other analysts can't use it. The NSA excuses these practices by saying that it must protect its methods of collecting data. It is true that the NSA's collection techniques must be carefully protected and therefore that the information it gathers must be handled very carefully. If, for instance, a report of a particular telephone conversation ever got back to the two people who had it, they might conclude that their phones were tapped or that one of them was a traitor. On the other hand, if the NSA's report of that conversation was too sterile, analysts would not give it much credence. There is a fine line to be drawn here, but there is no question in my mind that the NSA regularly and deliberately draws that line to make itself look good rather than to protect secrets. Somehow the point does not get through at the NSA, any more than it does at the CIA's espionage branch, that it hurts the overall intelligence effort if a collecting agency does not properly share its information. And when it delays sharing until it can give the information directly to the decision-makers, we run into the kind of problem we've seen with the Soviet brigade. ■

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Editorial:

"Rent-a-Mouth" Turner Is Wrong—Again

Retired Admiral Stansfield Turner headed the Central Intelligence Agency during the years when, it is the opinion of many insiders and this magazine, morale and productivity were at their lowest. Now he says we must do away with "The Pentagon's Intelligence Mess," as he titled an opinion piece which *The Washington Post* printed on January 12th. He wants to strengthen the Defense Intelligence Agency by eliminating the Service intelligence agencies. He said they were sabotaging American military intelligence—by parochialism, and because their expertise is so persuasive, he leads us to believe inferentially, that DIA is "a pushover" for the individual Services.

Turner is an expert on sabotage of this sort. Look what he did to the CIA. This is the man who left us damned-near naked in Iran. This is also the man, we can now report, who, shortly after Jimmy Carter was voted out of office, went out of his way to dine one night with columnist Jack Anderson. That night, Turner tried unsuccessfully to plant a "survey" he said he had done of CIA personnel which, Turner claimed, showed that morale in the Agency was higher than in many years. It was, obviously, Turner's ploy to persuade the Reagan Administration to keep him in office. (Anderson himself called *AFJ* later one evening and personally confirmed Turner's not very subtly proposed leak. Anderson had learned that *AFJ* knew of the dinner meeting and was apparently worried that *AFJ* might print the story while Turner was still in office. That made us wonder *why* Jack Anderson was so worried: Would a story about that dinner shut off a vital source of his information?)

So much for Turner's intellectual and political acumen: A plug from Jack Anderson was going to sway Ronald Reagan's decision on who would run the CIA? Little wonder that a senior member of Carter's inner circle said of Turner, after one of his White House briefings, "That man is a mental pygmy."

Vint Lawrence

(For real insight into Turner's mentality, one needs to read his 1985 memoir, *Secrecy and Democracy*. On page one, he told us the book "is not a memoir or a chronicle of my stewardship as the Director of Central Intelligence." On page three, he wrote, "This book, then, is about my experiences from 1977 to 1981." On page 11, he actually *complained* about having been promoted to four-star admiral in 1975. "Although I was given the fourth star of full admiral, I was 'sent away' to Naples"—as if being made Commander-in-Chief of NATO's Southern Flank [the "front line" of naval command, most officers would agree] were a demotion because it took him away from what he considered "the influential areas of the military." Thus, Stansfield Turner wrote his own epitaph as the only naval officer in American history who complained publicly about being promoted to four-star admiral.)

Since retiring, Turner has been earning part of his living as a network TV commentator. Our former Director of Central Intelligence is now in the "rent-a-mouth" business. But he's wrong in mouthing off about DIA—not 100% wrong, just way off base.

Turner's idea of "intelligence" for the Iranian rescue mission in 1980 was to inundate Delta Force with reams of material—little (if any) of it annotated to highlight its relevance to the unit's pending rescue mission, etc. The Army finally had to insert its own agents to find out what Delta Force needed to know about the American Embassy in Tehran, while Turner was frantically recruiting back to service many of the clandestine operators he had summarily retired or fired.

The Defense Intelligence Agency today is a recognized expert in critical military intelligence issues, working in full partnership with the CIA and the military Services. DIA's contributions range from lead responsibilities for certain national intelligence estimates, to vital innovations in the field of strategic indications and warning, to time-sensitive operational support to the commanders-in-chief of the unified and specified commands. Its work has become the subject of high praise from the highest levels of the Executive and Legislative branches of government as well as from William Casey, the current Director of Central Intelligence. DIA works day in and day out in close cooperation with the Service intelligence chiefs. *Teamwork*, not *rivalry*, is the basis of this effort. DIA is good—and getting better. That is also testimony to the input it gets from the Service intelligence agencies which Turner would have us eliminate.

Turner's tenure at CIA showed the world how important it is to have experts instead of amateurs working the problem.

Benjamin F. Schemmer

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Technology has so increased the amount of information we can acquire that a whole new set of problems has resulted. On the one hand, analysts are inundated with data and must find ways to filter, store, and retrieve what is significant. On the other hand, analysts must be concerned with whether they are receiving everything that is collected in their area of interest; with whether the members of the intelligence community—the CIA's espionage branch, the NSA [National Security Agency], the Defense organizations responsible for overhead reconnaissance, the CIA's electronic surveillance component, the State Department's diplomatic reporting system, the FBI's foreign intelligence branch, the Defense Intelligence Agency's [DIA] attaches, the intelligence organizations of the military services, and the intelligence offices of the departments of Treasury, Energy, and the Drug Enforcement Agency—all share what they collect. An unfortunate example of information not being shared adequately came in the summer of 1979. It led to the most serious intelligence failure of my tenure. The failure to forecast the fall of the Shah earlier that year was of far less significance than our mishandling of the report that a "combat brigade" of Soviet troops was in Cuba. Had we predicted the Shah's fall from power even six or seven months ahead of time, there was little the United States could have done to prevent it. The reporting on the combat brigade, however, did play a direct part in scuttling the SALT II arms control treaty with the Soviet Union.

In June 1979 President Carter had met with President Brezhnev and signed the SALT II treaty. The Senate was preparing to hold its initial hearings on ratification when, on July 18, the *Washington Star* reported, "Sen. Richard Stone,

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CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
29 January 1986

Why the spies?

By Stansfield Turner

TO some people, 1985 was "The Year of the Spy." It was, indeed, a year in which an amazing number of intelligence operations were exposed in the United States and abroad. Some 13 Americans were uncovered as spies for other countries, including: two active CIA officials and one former one; the first FBI agent ever to be charged with espionage; and an extensive ring of individuals spying from inside the US Navy. One of these persons was charged with spying for China and another for Israel; the remainder were working for the Soviet Union. On the other side of the coin, three people defected from Soviet intelligence organizations in 1985, even though one of them redefected.

One reason so many spies were exposed is that since 1975, when the Church Committee and two other groups investigated reports of past abuses of US intelligence agencies, American intelligence operations have been much more in the open. Once the dam of secrecy in intelligence was breached, the public's inquisitiveness was tweaked; the US media are diligent in pursuing any hints of spying activities.

Also, today the public learns about a larger percentage than formerly of spies who are detected. Every time we take a spy to trial there is a risk of having to disclose new secrets in order to win a conviction. For years this inhibited the CIA, and to a lesser extent the Justice Department, from proceeding to prosecution. Over the past eight to 10 years there has been a greater willingness to prosecute suspected spies, especially since the Congress passed a law in 1980 that reduced the risk of having to give up secrets in court.

It is hoped, though, an even more important reason for the uncovering of spies in 1985 was that American counterintelligence has improved. In finding spies, one has to look for clues in every corner. It's easy to become paranoid: The CIA was for many years. In 1975, though, the then-Director of the CIA, William Colby, fired the man who had headed CIA counterintelligence for 20 years and whose overly suspicious approach had led to few visible results and many wild-goose chases. There has been a marked improvement since.

Another area of clear improvement is cooperation between the CIA and the FBI. American counterintelligence is split between these two organizations: The FBI handles matters inside the United States and the CIA outside. Before about 1975 the key personalities in both the CIA and the FBI were unwilling to share information or work together. That has changed, especially since the appointment in 1978 of William Webster as the director of the FBI.

In 1985 our counterintelligence was clearly helped by a number of defectors from Soviet intelligence organizations. Some of the most valuable material a defector brings is the identity of American citizens who are providing information to Soviet agents. Even Vitali Yurchenko, who defected and redefected in 1985, is reported to have given us clues that led to uncovering several Americans who were spying for the Soviet Union.

At the same time, we should recognize that shortcomings still exist in US counterintelligence which may have led to some of the 1985 spying activity. We have too much information that is classified; too many people who are granted clearances to see that information; too confused a system for handling the most classified materials; too few rechecks on people who have been given clearances; and insufficient attention to signs of abnormal behavior on the part of people holding security clearances.

Finally, it is reasonable to assume that more Russians were spying on us in 1985 than a decade ago and, hence, that there were more spies to be caught. In the last 10 years the Soviet economy has taken a downturn and one response the Soviets have taken has been to steal Western technology to help their economy.

We can certainly anticipate a continuing high level of Soviet spying in 1986 and beyond, because the Soviet economy is going to need all the help it can get. Also, we must recognize that because we are a free, democratic society we will be more vulnerable to this spying than we would like. There are lots of steps we can take to lessen the danger. But as long as we do value our citizens' rights, as it is hoped we always will, we will be handicapped in how vigorously we can pursue Americans who spy against their country.

But there is a balancing factor. It is that the sudden rash of defectors from Soviet intelligence organizations tells us that something is wrong inside the Soviet intelligence apparatus, if not Soviet society. The CIA would be spinning on its ear if three, or even two, substantial officers had defected to the Soviet Union in the course of just a few months. Soviet intelligence officials will be working hard to find the cause of these defections and prevent reccurences, but that effort will detract from their spying work. I suspect there will be more defectors anyway, and that they will help us ferret out the traitors in our midst.

Adm. Stansfield Turner, former director of Central Intelligence, is the author of "Secrecy and Democracy — the CIA in Transition."

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29 January 1986

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Panel of Experts to Study Dangers Of Terrorists Using Nuclear Arms

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 28 — A panel of experts on nuclear weapons design, terrorism and intelligence matters will study the danger of terrorists' stealing a nuclear bomb or the material to make one.

At a news conference today, leaders of the group asserted that the risk of nuclear terrorism is increased by poor security at storage depots and weapons plants, and by the growing amount of weapons-grade plutonium that has been entering the commercial market after being separated from power plants' nuclear waste.

According to Paul Leventhal, a former Congressional staff member who is the group's executive vice chairman, if current processing rates continue, there will be 400 tons of separated plutonium in private hands by the year 2000, twice the amount now contained in Soviet and American nuclear weapons.

The panel, the International Task Force on Prevention of Nuclear Terrorism, is financed by the Carnegie Corporation. It is headed by Rear Adm. Thomas Davies, retired, and Bernard O'Keefe, chairman of EG & G Inc., a corporation that has done development and testing of nuclear weapons. Admiral Davies is a former Assistant Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and a former head of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Bureau.

Mr. O'Keefe, one of those who developed the firing circuits for the first atomic bombs, expressed concern that while American military defense resources focused on a possible Soviet nuclear attack on the United States or a Soviet invasion of Western Europe, a third and more likely possibility — nuclear terrorism that could provoke one of the others — received little attention or financing.

Admiral Davies criticized plans to reduce financing of security improvement projects at nuclear installations in the United States while exempting from budget cuts the production of nuclear warheads.

Theodore Taylor, another member of the panel, who has designed nuclear research reactors, said that he would meet at the nuclear research center at Los Alamos, N.M., with three other specialists to examine the question of whether a terrorist group could manufacture a nuclear weapon.

The 26 panel members, who are from nine countries, also include Harold Agnew, former director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory; Brian Jenkins, an expert on terrorism for the Rand Corporation; Yonah Alexander, director of the Institute for Studies in International Terrorism of the State University of New York; Inga Thorsson, former Swedish Under Secretary of State for Disarmament; Stansfield Turner, former Director of the Central Intelligence, and Yuval Neeman, an Israeli physicist and politician who has been instrumental in developing Israel's nuclear weapons capability.

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27 January 1986

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The CIA Oil Forecast

Stansfield Turner may be correct that generally Central Intelligence Agency anaysis is superior to that of the Defense Intelligence Agency ["The Pentagon's Intelligence Mess," Outlook, Jan. 12]. However, he gave only two examples, and one of them was dead wrong.

As Adm. Turner explained, the CIA issued a report in April 1977 that said the Soviet oil industry was in trouble and that by 1985 the U.S.S.R. would be importing oil. He went on to say, "In time the CIA was proven correct."

Hardly. In fact, the Soviet Union was the world's largest producer of oil last year, at over 11.8 million barrels per day, compared with the 8 to 10 million barrels per day the CIA forecast for 1985 in the report Adm. Turner says was "proven correct." Indeed, last year the Soviet Union exported 2.8 million barrels per day, second only to Saudi Arabia. Much of that oil was sold at concessional prices and in soft currencies, but the portion paid for in hard cash earned the U.S.S.R. at least $10 billion—quite a difference from the CIA's account, which had the Soviets importing oil by the mid-1980s.

The story told by Adm. Turner was exactly backwards. The 1977 CIA report was widely criticized at the time as alarmist and unsupported by the evidence. The standard account of the issue (Marshall Goldman's "The Enigma of Soviet Petroleum"), while being as sympathetic as possible to the CIA's claim, makes clear why most analysts found the agency's forecast implausible.

It was the Defense Intelligence Agency, not the CIA, that took the correct position on the Soviet oil output issue.

PATRICK CLAWSON
Washington